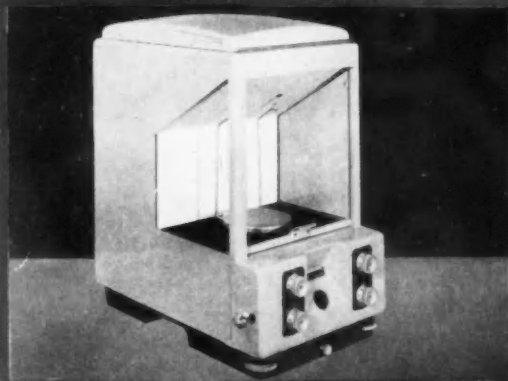


# Design



THE MAGAZINE FOR MANUFACTURERS, DESIGNERS AND RETAILERS



OCTOBER 1952 NUMBER 46

The Council of Industrial Design

OCT 23 1952

PRICE TWO SHILLINGS



### *House on the cards*

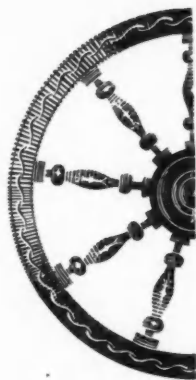
However conveniently you live (thanking TI for ready hot water, well cooked dinners and well ironed shirts) the future holds surprises. There seems quite a chance that the house of tomorrow will draw all its heat from the soil in the garden . . . that your telephone will take messages by night and pass them on in the morning . . . that your food will be cooked by radio-frequency waves. It's by no means impossible that your clothes will be cleaned by sound instead of soap . . . What's the link between scientific principles and practical politics? Component parts. When TI is consulted about the components, good ideas take shape.

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(in Urea Formaldehyde).*

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Should please the strictest mater,  
And what a nifty number  
Is our G.P.O. 'phone housing!*

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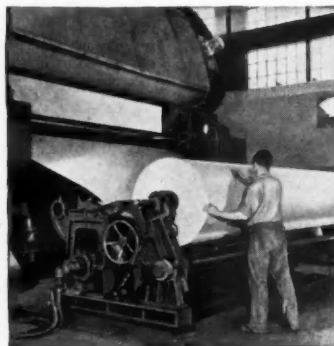


**E. K. COLE LTD. SOUTHEND-ON-SEA ESSEX**



Scene reconstructed by Roy Carnon

EARLY IN THE 1890's, Commander Henry Bradwardine Jackson — knowing nothing of the work of Marconi — first conceived the idea that torpedo boats might announce their approach to a capital ship by the use of wireless waves. In 1895, in the torpedo-school ship 'Defiance' at Devonport, he began secret experiments on Admiralty instructions. Before the end of the year he had succeeded in transmitting, from one end of the ship, signals of sufficient intensity to ring an electric bell in the receiving circuit at the other. After meeting Marconi, who first visited England the following summer, he went rapidly ahead with the evolution of naval wireless telegraphy, making vital contributions to the development of world communications. The tempo of modern life has certainly quickened since 1895, when Albert E. Reed first developed the production of super-calendered newsprint. In the reclaimed straw paper mill he had acquired the previous year, his first machines produced but six cwt. of paper an hour. Compare with this the six tons an hour reeled off the modern high-speed machines in the great Aylesford mills of the Reed Paper Group — their continually-expanding production including newsprint, kraft and tissue papers. For to-day the Reed Paper Group with its great resources and technical experience is one of the largest paper-making organisations in the world.



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# Design

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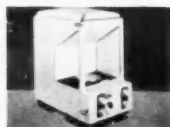
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## FRONT COVER PICTURES

Wedgwood mug by *Pye table radio*  
R. Guyatt (page 34) receiver (page 24)



Oertling analytical  
balance (page 12)

RCA Dobby weave  
fabrics (page 23)

## On moving with the times

"Only men who confuse themselves with God would dare to pretend in this anguished and bloody era that they know the exact road to the promised land. You of the liberal party will perhaps understand me best when I vigorously disclaim infallibility. For it seems to me that an authentic humility, an awareness of the complexity of men's choices, a tolerance for diverse opinions, and a recognition of the need for brave experimentation are the heart of any liberal faith."

GOVERNOR ADLAI STEVENSON

NO MATTER WHAT the campaign, Governor Stevenson's words sound like common sense. We quote them, not to put rods into pickle for our own backs, but because at this juncture in the history of design, when a new school of thought is breaking through, both sides should practise tolerance, the sceptical opponents as well as the friends of creative design.

It is probable that even in the short run the most realistic approach to design is one of "brave experimentation"; in the long run there is no doubt that we shall be remembered for the creative work that is done in our times. But the liberal reformer will not forget the bread and butter problems of making and selling nor, if he is honest, will he overlook some of his chickens that are currently coming home to roost, pale chickens with splayed peg legs for instance, sharp angular birds with little comfort in them. We can see others coming over the horizon but they are as yet vogueish shapes not yet judgeable in proper perspective. The interpreter of new design to the multitude cannot help but acquire "an authentic humility" if he himself moves with the times.

And yet he should not be discouraged. We are convinced that his money is on the right horse. The brave experimentation of our younger designers is fast seeping into our daily life and becoming an accepted standard. The daring textiles that were once ordered only for exhibitions are now stocked without question by hard headed shopkeepers; the familiar lines of modern furniture are common 'props' in popular advertising; and contemporary chairs have found their way into the station buffet at Crewe.

These new ideas are infectious. They will certainly spread to other industries serving the home, for the manufacturer is no longer faced with a choice between the esoteric exercises of the intellectuals and the bunny-borax of the gift shop. There is today a discriminating middle market ready to support any intelligent effort to design and make things suited to the time in which we live.

P.R.

# Coronation Souvenirs

## *A first selection*

ILLUSTRATED ON THIS PAGE are some of the 75 souvenirs already accepted by the Coronation Souvenirs Committee. From November 11 - January 24 a permanent exhibition of souvenirs will be open to buyers and the Press at the Council of Industrial Design.

Souvenirs will also be shown at the Harrogate Gifts and Fancy Goods Fair to be held from February 2-6, and there will be a public exhibition of them in the Tea Centre, London, in the early spring.

A circular plaque in aluminium silicon alloy showing a crowned portrait head of HM the Queen in profile (below left) has been prepared by the Souvenirs Committee for manufacturers. It costs £10. Manufacturers can also obtain for £2 special colour drawings of the Crown and Royal Arms (see DESIGN, September, page 35).

2



1: Plaster bust of HM the Queen by H. G. Paulin. 2: The plaque referred to above was designed by T. H. Paget. 3: Goblets by James Powell and Sons Ltd. 4: Mug adapted from a design by the late Eric Ravilious by Josiah Wedgwood & Sons Ltd (see page 34). 5: Wedgwood Coronation mug by R. Guyatt. 6: Bell by Gillet and Johnstone Ltd; ash tray by Briglin Pottery Ltd. 7: Enamelled biscuit tin designed for W. & R. Jacob & Co (Liverpool) Ltd by Design Research Unit.

1



3



4



5



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7



### *Design* FOR NOVEMBER

*Some features in next month's issue*

DESIGN POLICY in the Radiation Group of Companies

Design for British Railways

Contemporary British film sets

An analysis of furniture decoration

Review of the Commercial Motor Show

Review of Current Design

# Mass-produced Glassware

John Weyman

AS MANUFACTURERS OF SHERDLEY and RAVENHEAD domestic glassware, the directors of the United Glass Bottle Manufacturers, together with the directors of Johnsen and Jorgensen Flint Glass Ltd, the distributing organisation, decided in 1945 to re-examine the designs of their products. Few changes had been made during the period 1939-45 owing to restrictions and war conditions generally, and a favourable opportunity offered itself, not only to assess current demand but to consider new methods by which suitable designs might be created. In the past, as with many firms, designs had been produced as the result of consultations between directors, staff and customers without the employment of a qualified designer. By 1945 it was

felt that a more clear-cut policy for the creation of designs might be evolved.

In that year Johnsen and Jorgensen Flint Glass Ltd commissioned A. H. Williamson, a teacher at the Royal College of Art, to produce designs for mass-produced glassware, suitable particularly for the catering industry and the big purchasers of domestic glass. It is interesting to note that by sound teamwork, the designer, distributor and manufacturer were able to



TOP: Pressed-glass waterset with characteristic moulded decoration that is not attained in hand-blown glassware.

LEFT: A range of wine, sherry and cocktail glasses with a variety of faceted stems.



achieve the extremely successful results which are illustrated here.

Most of the mistakes which are so often made when a consultant designer is used seem to have been avoided. From the beginning the designer was brought into the closest contact with the methods of production, the technicians and the sales staff, so that before starting on the designs he had complete grasp of the different requirements which had to be met. The designer himself pays tribute to the mould-making department of the United Glass Bottle Manufacturers, where the staff carefully and skilfully interpreted every detail and refinement in his designs. Thus few, if any, of the designs produced had to be turned down, and of those put into production all have sold in large quantities. Furthermore, increasing quantities have been exported to Australia and other Empire markets.

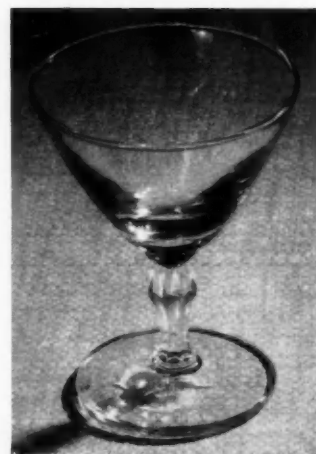
## Technical difficulties overcome

In order to overcome the heavy character of the traditional pressed-glass shape and the too often inappropriate decoration, special attention was given to the designing of the new shapes. They had to be suitable for machine production and at the same time be elegant and light in weight. The inherent quality of brightness was achieved by a form of decoration essentially moulded in character. It was necessary to design shapes and decoration which might be developed for use with a wide range of articles. And finally, it was



LEFT:

*Wine glass with slender convex faceted stem.*



LEFT:

*Cocktail glass with fluted stem decoration: mainly for domestic use.*



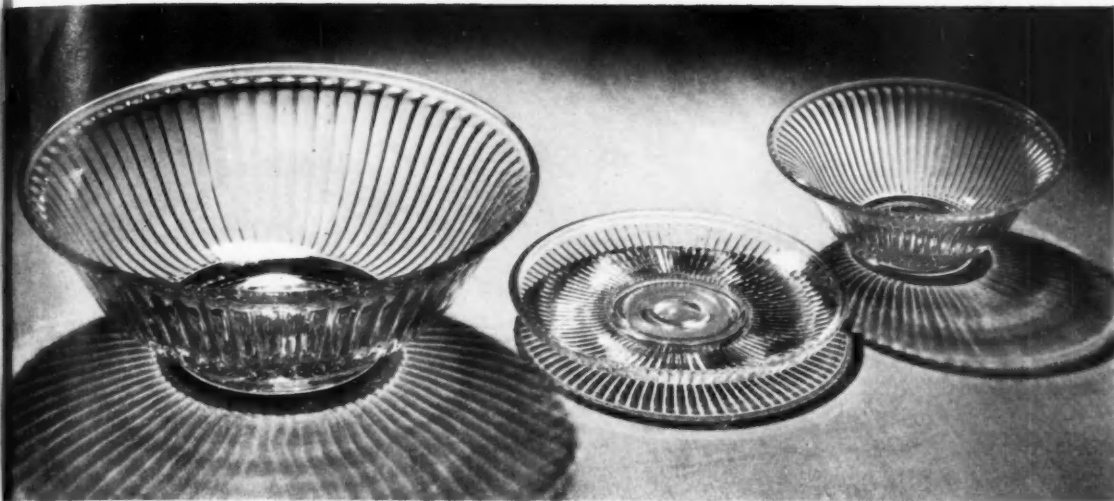
LEFT:

*The WORTHINGTON glass with graceful sloping curves.*

FAR LEFT:

*Bowl with a scalloped decoration which is achieved only in moulded glass.*





ABOVE: These 8 inch and 5 inch bowls, together with the saucer, have a simple moulded decoration which adds brilliance to the glass.

RIGHT: Moulded waterset in clear glass with a stepped formation at the base.

important to consider finish, pleasantness in handling and ease of cleaning.

At the present time the design policy is the joint responsibility of the directors of UGB who, on the one hand must ensure that a new design is in every way suited to automatic production, whilst on the other hand the directors of the distributing organisation are responsible for ensuring that style and trade requirements are incorporated in a new design. It seems evident that this close interest in design policy, taken at board level in each firm, is the most important factor in ensuring that the design standard of SHERDLEY and RAVENHEAD products is maintained. The results show what large-scale production can do to supply objects of good design, which at the same time can satisfy the practical needs of the hotel industry and the home. The process ensures a finished product that is both hard-wearing and cheap with the advantage over hand-made glasses that the shapes and sizes are of a guaranteed standard. Although machine-made, this glassware has a simple and clean appearance suited to the method of manufacture and in no way an imitation of the hand-made article.



RIGHT: A typical example of moulded glass attempting to reproduce a cut crystal pattern. This bowl was made before the new design policy was introduced.

# BALANCES

Hope Lovell

From physicists to grocers weighing machines of varying size and accuracy are essential equipment. In this article a critical comparison is made between balances from the United States and England, together with an example from Germany. As Hope Lovell shows, balance design often reflects national characteristics.

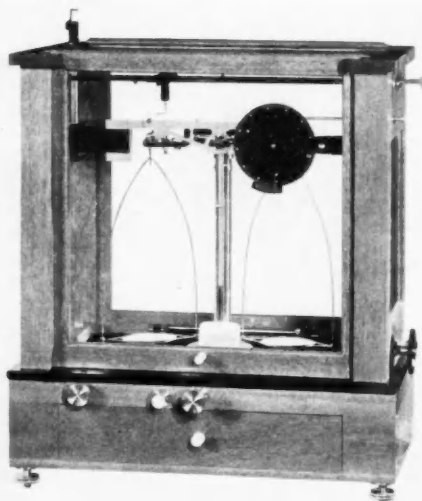
AN EXAMINATION OF NEW BALANCES produced in recent years by leading companies in the United States, this country and Germany shows considerable differences in the approach to design problems.

Basically, the balance, however highly developed and elaborated, uses the principle of discovering the weight of an object by balancing it against a known weight. The object and the known weight are each placed in pans hung at opposite ends of a beam balanced on a fulcrum. In the torsion-type balance the knife-edge is eliminated, but the basic principle of equating weights remains the same. Sometimes, as in the single-pan balance, one of the arms may be concealed.

The most familiar form of weighing instrument in use today is perhaps the grocer's scales, but these are for comparatively rough-and-ready measurements. The most familiar type of precision balance is that to be found in chemical laboratories, encased in a box of Honduras mahogany and glass.

It might be thought that few innovations are possible in such a product, but although the basic formula still remains the same many interesting changes have occurred recently. These have arrived partly through a search for greater precision, partly through developments in materials and methods, and partly through a desire for a different appearance.

The pursuit for greater technical excellence is much more marked in the new European balances than in those from the United States. The catalogue of one of the leading American agents shows no analytical balance of more advanced technical design than the Christian Becker model: 1. On the other hand, the Oertling 122 of British manufacture, 3, incorporates



1. ABOVE. Analytical balance produced by the Christian Becker Division of Torsion Balance Co., U.S.A. This shows the traditional type mahogany case before redesign by Carl Otto.

2. RIGHT. Latest form of the Christian Becker balance after redesign by Carl Otto.

3. FAR RIGHT. Multi-weight analytical balance model 122 by L. Oertling Ltd. An example of one of the latest English balances incorporating technical advances to permit finger-tip control of weights.

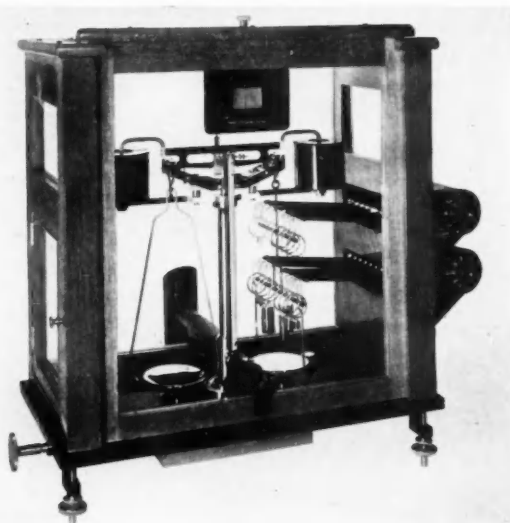
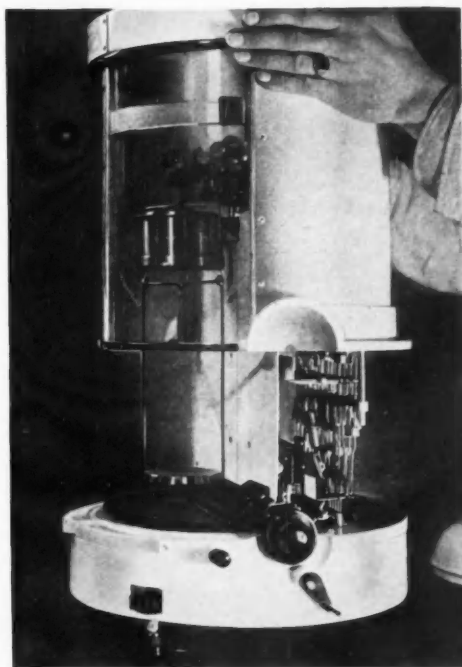
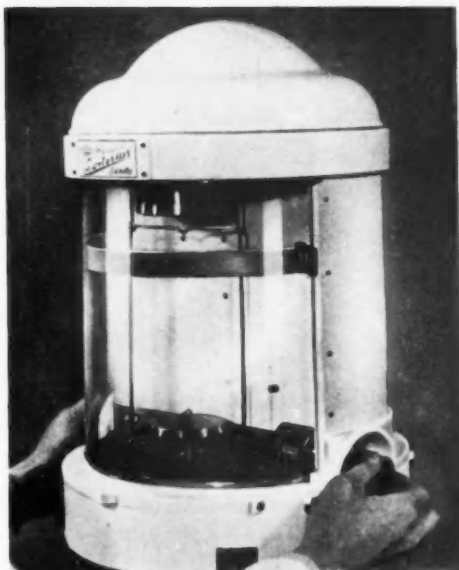


a number of features designed to simplify operation and improve accuracy. The most noticeable difference here is in the weight-loading mechanism which provides for rapid analytical weighing by a turn of the control knobs on the right and eliminates the use of loose weights. The scale is engraved on a minute graticule attached to the pointer and projected on to a ground-glass screen mounted in the case at eye-level. The large cylinders at each end of the beam provide the air-damping which renders the balance aperiodic. This allows accurate readings to be made much more easily and quickly than is possible with the 'free-swinging' pointer balance.

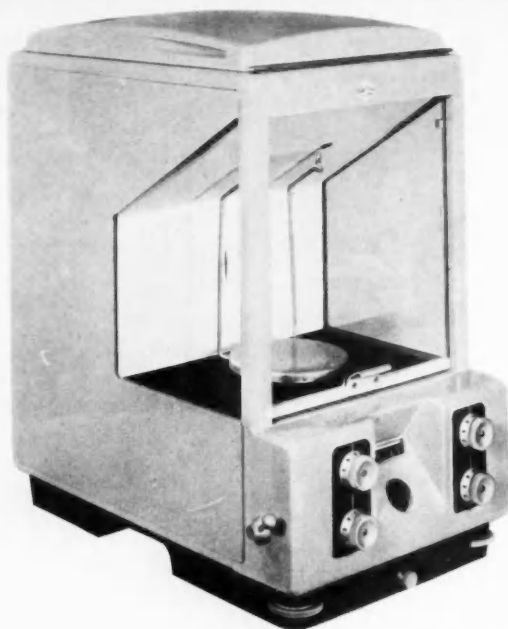
From a comparison between these two models it seems clear that the additional technical features visible in the English example, while incorporated in a modest way, do present a visual problem if they are not to destroy the effect of harmony that must be an essential feature of a balance. Both these balances are enclosed in the traditional mahogany case, usually a product of fine craftsmanship, made of the only timber suited to the exacting requirements.

## Die-casting for complex forms

Just as the Oertling 122 shows a typical European attempt to improve on the standard design by increasing its functional value, so the Christian Becker balance redesigned by Carl Otto, 2, shows a typical American improvement by means of visual innovations. The technical differences between the Christian Becker balance before and after redesign are negligible, but the appearance is considerably improved. The designer's aim was quite simply "to find a contemporary technique to produce a modern case in replacement of the original mahogany cabinet work." In studying this problem Carl Otto paid close attention to the possibility of interchangeable parts – the sides, the front and the back – to reduce the number of tools required. Die-castings were chosen in order to obtain more complex forms with a reduction in the number of different



4. TOP. The circular form of the German SELECTA balance made by Sartorius, breaks with the traditional box-shape. Technically, this model is in the same class as the two-pan analytical balances by Oertling (122) and Christian Becker.  
5. ABOVE. The SELECTA balance with cover partly removed.



6. ABOVE. *The CONSTANT, a single-pan constant load balance produced by L. Oertling Ltd.*

7. RIGHT. *A pharmaceutical balance designed by John Barnes, of Allen-Bowden Ltd, for W. & T. Avery Ltd.*

parts. Die-casting also enabled the sliding doors to be wrapped around each side of the cabinet giving much better access to the interior, hence reducing the area of the side panels so that windows were no longer required in them. Die-casting of the base provided all necessary mounting bosses for the column and arrest mechanism of the balance and so obviated the need for a number of small assemblies used in the previous models.

Simplification and legibility were aimed at in the styling of the balance mechanism, says Carl Otto. Confused shapes and appurtenances were smoothed out to give a quiet background for the reading of calibrated beams and dials. The chainomatic dial was treated as a 'bull's-eye,' and "in the interests of simplicity Grecian architecture was removed from the column and a simple pylon shape substituted." The case is finished in muted grey colour with a flat white interior.

### Notable German design

The lavish American approach to the problems of simplification should be compared with that of the German company of Sartorius, whose simplified case

for the SELECTA balance, 4 and 5, must have a marginal cost. In some ways, perhaps, the SELECTA single-pan balance illustrated is the most enterprising of all those chosen. By boldly adopting a cylindrical shape for the case this balance has broken the tradition of centuries. The base is cast and the remaining metal parts are simple pressings. Visually, it is a pity that the central hummock appears in the dome, although it was perhaps arranged in this way for greater stability. Technically, this balance is virtually the same as the Oertling model 122 already described. It is an equal-arm balance of traditional design, but viewed from the end instead of from the side. This can be seen clearly from the photograph showing the case being removed, 5. It is claimed for the new round shape that it requires a minimum of space, is solid and therefore not easily damaged in transit. The absence of corners results in a favourable temperature distribution and there is a minimum of surface exposed to heat and light beams. The position of the controls is such that they can be operated with the hand resting on the table. All the adjusting points are under the dome so that the assembling of these balances is said to be extremely simple.

The English single-pan balance, the Oertling CONSTANT, 6, exhibited at the Festival of Britain last year, is outstanding in that technical and visual innovations were introduced together. Although the



layman would imagine that this balance worked on the same principle as the SELECTA, the CONSTANT is not of the traditional equal-arm type, but has unequal arms with a constant load. This means that the weighing operation is performed by removing built-in weights to a value equal to that of the object being weighed. This model was designed by John Barnes, the first consultant designer to be employed by Oertling's. Since the Festival of Britain the model has been slightly simplified by the elimination of one of the controls. It has been designed for a case in cast aluminium alloy.

All the balances already described have been of the analytical type for precision work. A further interesting comparison of different design approaches can be seen in the field of dispensing or pharmaceutical balances, called by the Americans 'prescription' balances. The two British models illustrated, 7 and 9, are both extremely well-designed visually and show a steady improvement on the traditional shape. The Avery balance is another example of John Barnes' work, this time for W. & T. Avery Ltd.

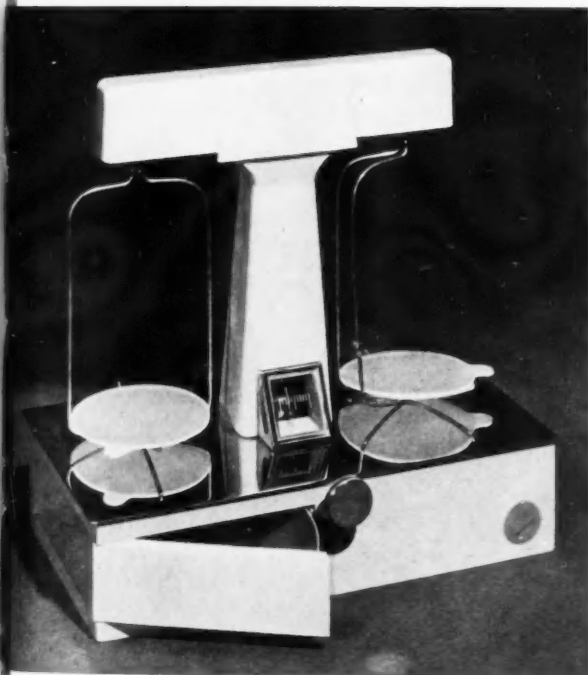
## Balance by Loewy

The American torsion balance, 8, designed by Raymond Loewy Associates, provides further illustra-



8. ABOVE. The new torsion prescription balance model RX-1, designed by Raymond Loewy Associates, for the Torsion Balance Co, U.S.A.

9. LEFT. The WHITE MONARCH pharmaceutical balance by W. A. Webb Ltd.



tion of differences in national outlook, both among consumers and manufacturers. This type of balance would not normally be used in this country by pharmacists, but is largely used for laboratory purposes for making quick weighings prior to analysis with the analytic balance. From the producer's point of view such a complete redesign is only possible with a large and assured home market, since the tooling required must have cost nearly £5,000. It is true Loewy standardised the basic case structure for four different models, which could be distinguished by variations in glass panels, chromium trim and distinctive metal finishes. But such methods require both an adaptable consuming public and a manufacturing system which can afford to scrap existing equipment and inherited techniques. The type of torsion balance produced in Europe which approximates to the Loewy balance is still, in appearance, a box of glass panels held together by metal corners, and is amateur in comparison.

It is clear, however, from this survey that although the United States has many advantages which allow the production of instruments of first-rate design, the European firms are not behindhand in their approach to visual design, and have the merit, moreover, of holding a better balance between technical advance and aesthetic improvement.



# REVIEW

LEFT: One of the odd things about the development of design at present is the difference between one trade and another. Suddenly one trade will blossom out from the rest. Wallpapers, for instance, are now showing considerably more life than carpets and linoleum. There is a large number of modern wallpapers in 'Design Review': many of them under 7s.

In this composite photograph, the top left-hand paper, PIAZZA, designed by Richard Spelling for Cole and Son (Wallpapers) Ltd, has a bold repeat motif on a green ground. The right-hand paper, with a white, austere pattern on a rose background, is by Arthur Sanderson and Sons Ltd. The lower example is by The Wallpaper Manufacturers Ltd. It has distinct geometrical pattern which, used with discretion, is able to give an architectural emphasis to an interior.

RIGHT: Changes in the design of flatware can rarely be made without hampering functional efficiency. These spoons in electro-plate, designed by W. P. Belk for Roberts and Belk Ltd, are at the same time simple and graceful.

BELOW: These PHOENIX heat-resisting glass saucepan lids are sold separately or together with saucepans. They are made by the British Heat-Resisting Glass Co and have the advantage that the cooking progress can be seen at a glance without lifting the lid.





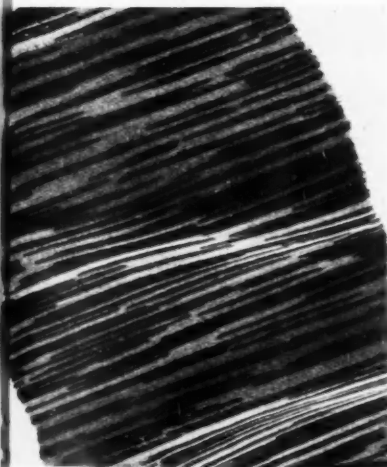
# OF CURRENT DESIGN

This is the third appearance of a new feature aimed at assisting retailers to meet the growing public demand for well-designed goods. It is also intended to give wider currency to 'Design Review,' the photographic index of contemporary British products of a high standard of design, open for inspection at the London headquarters of the CoID. Visitors there include foreign buyers as well as retailers, architects, interior designers, purchasing officers, exhibition selectors and members of the Press.



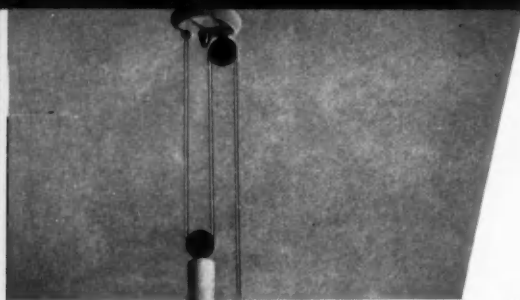
LEFT: As an alternative to the more usual materials of bone and metal, the use of walnut handles for this range of cutlery provides a pleasant foil to the stainless steel. The range was designed by A. W. Parkin-Moore for Mills, Moore and Co Ltd.

BELOW: Since the Festival of Britain there has been an increased interest shown in open-air or garden furniture which can be both durable and decorative. This chair, designed by Dennis Lennon and made by Else Lennon, is of metal rod, painted white and decorated with coloured discs.

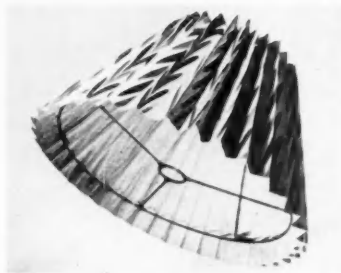


LEFT: Printing on cotton velvet has been carried out to a limited extent for a number of years for the dress trade. The designs used have tended to be either simple or rather bizarre, like the attempts to suggest leopard skin or snake skin. Shown here is an informal stripe well-suited to the character of cotton velvet, by Phipps and Son Ltd.





RIGHT: This inexpensive pleated paper lampshade and frame by Douglas Cockerell and Son has been hand-marbled by W. Chapman. The frame is cleverly designed with a push-in joint of bent wire so that it packs flat for posting.



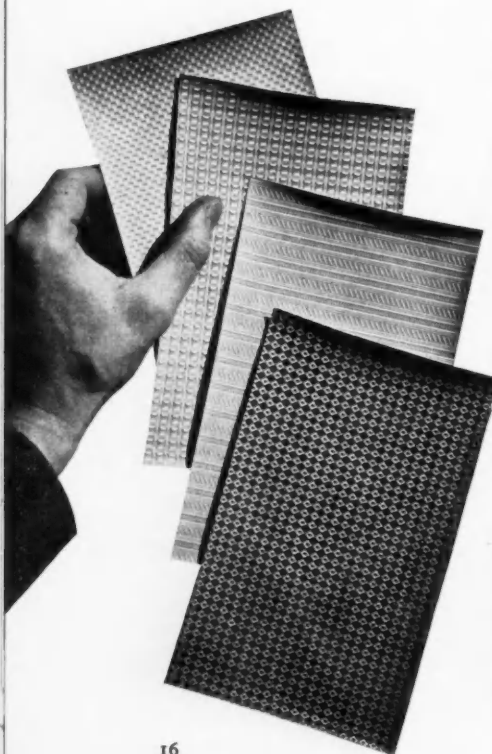
LEFT: For ceiling illumination it is convenient to have the light source at variable heights. In the case of this pendant fitting by Best and Lloyd Ltd, the star-pierced aluminium reflector is carried up to conceal the comparatively ugly lampsocket.



RIGHT: Robin Day has designed this nursing chair for S. Hille and Co. The mahogany frame supports a back of slatted beach and a rubberised-hair cushion on suspension springs. A chair that leaves the elbows free is an asset not only for nursing, but for knitting, sketching, etc. When placed side-to-side three of these chairs would form a settee.

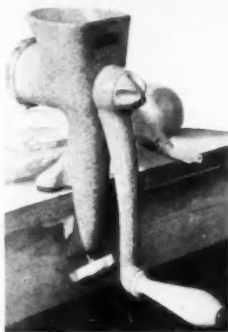


LEFT: This swatch contains four samples of VYNIDE upholstery material, designed by Charles Garnier for the Leathercloth Division of ICI. This interesting new development should be welcomed enthusiastically, for it comes in a field that has for too long relied on the imitation of other materials. The embossed patterns are small in scale with repeats of about  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch. The colours offered are in pastel shades. While the samples shown here are suitable for transport or domestic upholstery, a range of lighter weight is available for wall coverings or table tops.



RIGHT: The chief merits of this sideboard lie in the neat detailing of the handles. This is particularly true of the doors where a finger grip is cut into the stiles. It was designed by Robert Heritage for G. W. Evans Ltd.





LEFT: The easily reached screw-clamp attachment and the simple screw-head that holds the handle bracket in place are some of the commendable design features in this new food mincer by John Harper and Co Ltd. The finish is green mottled enamel or tinned.



RIGHT: The tall, narrow shape of this ENGLISH ROSE refrigerator gives a generous capacity in situations where space is limited. Again, the hinges allow the door to be fully opened even if the side is close up to a return wall. The other equipment shown is by the same makers: CSA Industries Ltd.

LEFT: An original solution to the problem of cooking small meals is suggested by this PRESTIGE portable oven by Platers and Stampers Ltd. It is for use with gas, oil or an open fire, and the heat is diffused through a heavy steel base. A thermometer is built into the aluminium cover.

BELOW, LEFT: Laminated-wood moulded for furniture construction has a style peculiarly its own. Packet Furniture Ltd has produced several chairs in the material but this one, designed by G. A. Jenkins, is surprisingly inexpensive. For transport it can be taken apart and packed flat.



BELOW: This folding work-basket by Dennis Beytagh has a frame of natural beech with a removable taffeta bag hung on the legs by brass rings.

BELOW, RIGHT: Here is another example of outdoor/indoor furniture designed by Dennis Lennon. The metal frame contrasts pleasantly with the seat and back of woven cane. It is made by G. W. Scott and Sons Ltd.

Manufacturers in a wide range of durable consumer goods (excluding textiles) are invited to submit their new products for inclusion in 'Design Review.' Enquiries should be addressed to Mark Hartland Thomas, Chief Industrial Officer, Council of Industrial Design. Further particulars of goods shown will be supplied on request.



## DESIGN and THE RETAILER

*There has been an impression for some time that contemporary furniture and furnishings belong to the South of England, and that they are too light in colour and too flimsy in construction for the dirt and hard wear they would meet in the North. Certainly some of the colours used in London are not suitable for Manchester, but the intelligent manufacturer recognises this and adapts his products to suit the area he wishes to serve. Also, the wise retailer keeps manufacturers informed of his needs.*

*In the past few years I have been in contact with retailers all over the country, and my experience has been that new ideas thrive best in London, but then the same is true in the world of fashion. Next to London, the greatest activity is in the industrial areas of the Midlands and the North. This is perfectly natural, for where there is activity and hard work there must also be thoughtful people: people who need furnishings to suit busy lives.*

*When there is a nucleus of likely customers the real need, whether in the North or the South, is for retailers who want to sell good things designed for the needs of today, and who wish to do so because they like them themselves. The number of these retailers is growing. In DESIGN, January 1952, there was an article called 'It Has Happened Here,' which told how H. J. F. Hemmings, one of the directors of Hemmings Bros (Northampton) Ltd, had succeeded in introducing contemporary design into an established family business. In a very short time the proportion of 'contemporary' sales had gone up from 30 per cent to 80 per cent. The story which begins on the opposite page is told by two young men who have recently started a new business in Yorkshire.*

JEAN STEWART, Retail Officer CoID.

# NORTHERN ENTERPRISE



*The recess on the landing in this Doncaster shop is usefully occupied by a chest of drawers. Note the careful arrangement of contemporary accessories on the window-sill.*



## Gordon Dunn and Ben Beardsall

*A wide range of contemporary furniture, carpets, fabrics, lighting fittings and accessories is stocked by York Tenn in spite of the smallness of their premises.*

OUR BUSINESS IN DONCASTER was inspired by a visit to Sweden three years ago. We were impressed by many things in that country, but in particular by a shop called Svensk Tenn. It is not a large shop, but the contemporary crafts on show set a high standard. We unashamedly adapted the name and our business is called York Tenn.

We started with small premises in Doncaster about a year ago, but within a few months we had doubled the selling space available and had to open a branch at nearby Retford. Contemporary furnishings may seem rather a risky line with which to start a new business in an area which is notoriously conservative in taste, but we have found our policy to be the right one, and it will doubtless be of interest to enumerate some of its main points.

We maintain that in any town there is a nucleus of people who are interested in contemporary design and will actively support it. They are all people with trained eyes, either through their work, such as architects, artists and engineers, or because at some

time they have had visual training in art schools and colleges. We found this to be true in Doncaster: in fact we were unofficially adopted by the staff of the Borough Architect's Department, who helped us tremendously. There would seem to be scope in every town of medium size for one shop to concentrate on contemporary furnishings, and enough trade to justify it.

The effect of publicity devoted to the promotion of contemporary furnishings by manufacturers, daily papers, women's magazines and the Council of Industrial Design is considerable. It probably exceeds any publicity campaign that the furniture trade has ever known. Certainly in a new venture we would have been extremely foolish to ignore it.

Our capital resources and selling space were limited, so we could only afford a comparatively small amount of stock. Consequently our approach was to sell ideas, give service, and follow up the orders we knew we would get from national publicity. Contemporary furniture is virtually a staple product and





*An ugly fireplace has been carefully screened and the distempered wall contrasts markedly with the gaily patterned fabrics which cover the end wall. The practice of displaying new designs in 'room corners' is a feature of this shop.*

so we decided to stock sample pieces to show construction and finish, coupled with a comprehensive range of photographs of other designs. This approach was fully justified and brought results. However, we are now building up our stocks as the public prefers to see the actual thing it wishes to buy.

We have found it essential that we should be able to

supply everything for the contemporary home. Quite a lot of our larger sales started with the sale of a piece of good pottery, or a length of low-priced curtain fabric, or even one of the indoor plants we have on show. These small things seem to infiltrate into people's homes and demand things of a similar character to go with them. We have noted this effect upon ourselves, for we have already changed our letter headings and business cards.

We have found that it takes approximately six months to build up a rhythm of enquiry to, and supply from, manufacturers, coupled with a steady flow of sales and delivery to the public. We have been helped greatly by the fact that contemporary furnishings appeal instantly to the eye. The clean lines, natural finishes and bright, clear colours have proved tremendously important in arresting attention involuntarily.

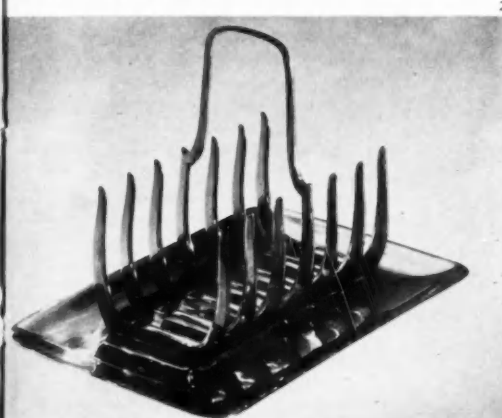
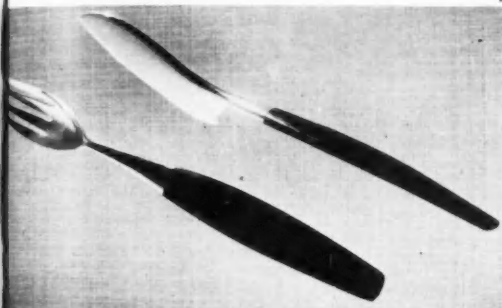
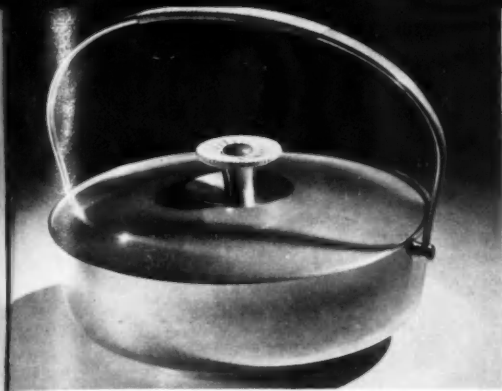
The effect on other retailers is interesting. Retford is a market town in which no contemporary furnishings had ever been shown in their proper setting. A few weeks after our shop opened another retailer had a window full of contemporary furniture, and the standard of display was definitely high. There are indications that one or two other retailers may follow suit, and the effect of this upon the town and ourselves is very important.

We find that hundreds of people come to see our windows every week: particularly at night when indirect lighting shows our settings at their best. On busy days there is almost a queue to look in our windows. It will be interesting to see if this is maintained over a longer period and what its full effect, so far as turnover is concerned, will be. At least we know that contemporary furnishings have definitely captured the public interest.



*The shelf unit on the right assists in dividing the shop into 'room corners' and also provides additional space for display of pottery and glassware. Poor daylight is supplemented by several table lamps and pendant fittings.*





## Design progress at

## The ROYAL COLLEGE

IT IS NOW FOUR YEARS since the work on industrial design at the Royal College of Art was reorganised under six separate schools of design. The recent Summer Exhibition of industrial design, held at the College, provided the necessary opportunity to assess the present state of development. The exhibition, though it was open to the public during its run at the College, later moved to the fourth floor of Liberty's store in Regent Street, where an increased number of people was able to see it. On both occasions some of the students' designs were for sale. If one can judge from the purchases made by manufacturers, it would seem that the College will soon show its influence on British domestic products.

Before the students can obtain their diploma (Des RCA) they must work in an industrial firm for nine months. Out of a total of 114 design students at the College, 32 completed their three-year course this year and found work in industry. One student, R. L. Carter, from the School of Wood, Metals and Plastics, in company with Keith New, a student of stained glass at the College, has been awarded a special scholarship to study glass design at Corning and Steuben Glass, USA. This is an incidental result of the visit paid by Arthur A. Houghton jr, vice-president of Corning, to the International Design Congress last year.

The following report on design progress at the College has been confined to work from the Schools of Silversmithing and Jewellery, Ceramics and Textiles, for it is in these schools that creative developments appear to be most marked.

### Silversmithing and Jewellery

The stigma of 'craftwork,' as distinct from the preparation of prototypes for quantity production by machine, has for too long been attached to silversmithing departments in art schools. As more than three-quarters of the silver industry's total output, in terms of quantity, consists of machine-made products, it is surprising that almost all art schools in Britain persist in training students to be artist-craftsmen. The one striking exception is the School of Silversmithing and Jewellery at the Royal College of Art. Here, under Professor R. Y. Goodden, training in craftsmanship is secondary to training in design. Throughout the course

design is studied in relation to materials, tools, manufacturing processes and the function of an article. For example, the muffin dish with hot water compartment, 1, by J. E. Stapley (3rd year), is designed for quantity production in electro-plate. The knob and handle of this prototype are bound in cane. Contrast of unlike materials is also a feature of the coffee pot and milk jug, 4: a prototype made in silver with leather grips to the handles and knobs, by E. G. Clements (3rd year).

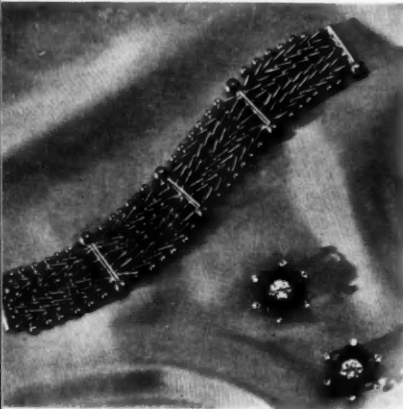
Free experiment within the scope of conventional materials is an essential part of the designer's early training. Both 2 and 3 are good



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11



12

examples from first-year students. The dessert knife and fork by A. G. S. Benney is of silver with rosewood handles: the toasterack by M. B. A. Yehia is of gilding metal.

Although many students design in terms of mechanical production, few of them are able to co-operate fully with a manufacturer until their training is complete. An exception to this is David Mellor (2nd year) whose first design for a set of cutlery, 5, was taken up by a Sheffield manufacturer. The pieces in this set are the first prototypes and, like those in 6, which represent the final versions agreed by the manufacturer, are executed in silver: the knife in stainless steel and bone. More playful in character are the sauce and salt boats, 9, and the silver teaset, 10. The first is by E. G. Clements (3rd year): the second by A. G. S. Benney. Both students are leaning heavily on recent work from Denmark.

No jewellery in any country appears to be developing a reliable contemporary idiom of its own. Every designer who consistently strives towards this goal is still in the throes of experiment and aesthetic uncertainty. It is not surprising, therefore, that recent work at the College was generally disappointing. Amongst the more interesting designs is the gilt metal chain link bracelet, 7, by Joyce Titcomb (3rd year), and the earrings in black wire and paste by Jean Morris (1st year). The brooch and earclips, 11, also by Joyce Titcomb, are formed of various artificial stones set in gilt metal. The three pieces can be assembled together with a choker of gilt ball chain to form an elaborate necklace. This design was developed with help from the School of Fashion Design at the College.

## Ceramics

Under Professor R. W. Baker, the School of Ceramics has trained several designers who are now working for pottery manufacturers. While some of the training is carried on in the Potteries, it is possible for students to use the College's equipment in order to experiment with new earthenware shapes. There was little evidence of this at the exhibition and most students seemed to be limited to the creation of decorative designs for 'blanks' supplied by pottery

Design: Number 46

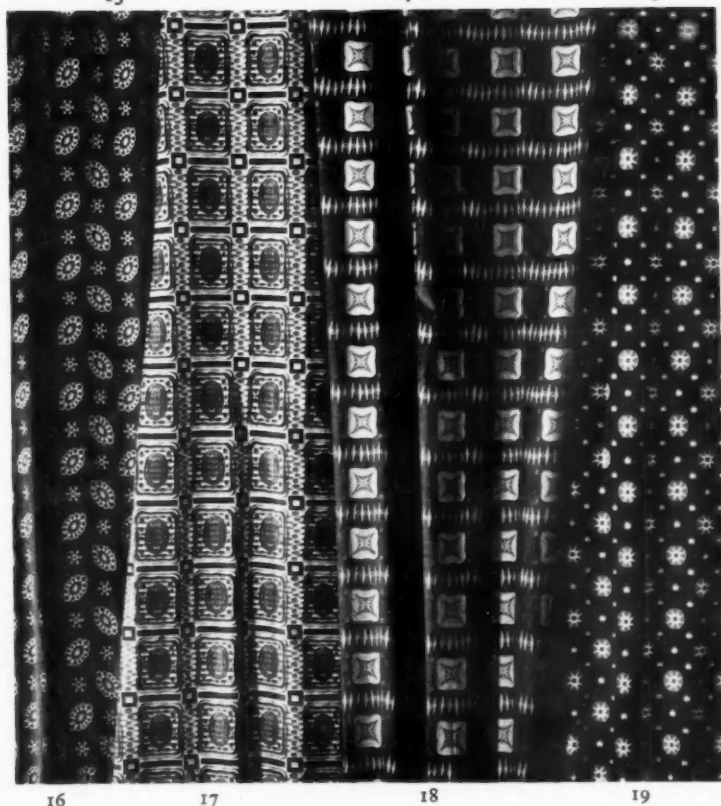
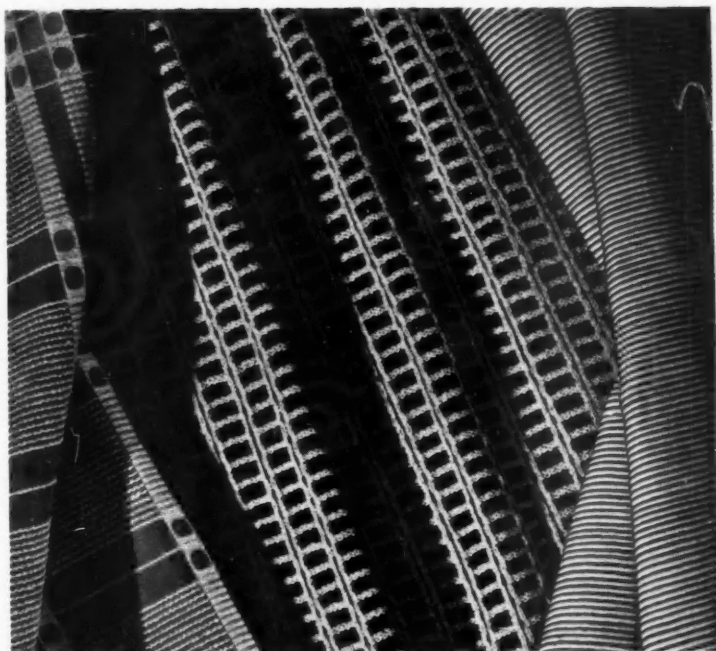
firms. One of the few exceptions is the pickle jar, 8, designed and made by R. Jefferson (1st year) for use in the senior common room at the College. It has an earthenware body with gold lustre hand-painted decoration. Two of the best examples of decoration designed for existing Wedgwood 'blanks' are shown in 12. The left-hand 'global motif' is by Betty Davies (3rd year); the continuous scroll design on the right is by Monica Ford (3rd year).

## Woven Textiles

The School of Textiles is divided into two sections: one for weaving the other for printing. At this year's exhibition it was undoubtedly the woven designs which commanded most attention. With the guidance of Margaret Leischner, students in this department have evolved some striking and original designs within the limitations imposed by normal commercial production.

In Dobby woven cloths the emphasis is laid on fancy yarns and three-dimensional pattern effects. The cotton fabric, 13, has a blue-grey, yellow and pink check designed by Ann Jennifer Bell (3rd year). The same student is responsible for 14: an all cotton and cotton gimp with black and lemon yellow check design. The two-beam plain woven all cotton fabric, 15, is by W. A. Brook (2nd year). It has a horizontal stripe in yellow and lilac.

In very few cases can one point nowadays, in art schools or industry, to creative designs for the Jacquard loom. Few manufacturers are prepared to risk the cost of cutting sets of cards for new and untried designs. Instead, if they wish to produce something with a contemporary character, they prefer to rely on Dobby woven cloths and leave their Jacquard looms to carry on weary variations of period floral and other motifs. It is, then, particularly encouraging to see at this exhibition so many bold experiments with the Jacquard loom. The blue astral design using mercerised cotton, 16, is by Ann Jennifer Bell. Another design, 17, using mercerised cotton in blue and purple, is by Margaret Foster (3rd year). 18, is a fine cotton fabric in yellow and blue by F. Hoswell (3rd year), while 19, is a design for mercerised cotton in red and blue by Sheila Hankinson (3rd year). M.F.





# RADIO CABINETS : 1952

Peter E. M. Sharp

THE INITIAL IMPACT OF THIS YEAR'S National Radio Show was the display, which in most cases tended to hide the contents and emphasise the manufacturer's trade name. Stand displays ranged from the baroque opulence of Philips (James Gardner) to the almost stark simplicity of the pink sugar almond palace of Murphy (Eden Minns). As an exhibition of display techniques it was well worth a visit; indeed, some designers, notably Robin Day (Ekco), and Victor Taylor (Ace), see page 35, had gone to considerable efforts to show that the exhibits fit into contemporary rooms.

It is clear that domestic radio should be considered in two separate categories: furnishing and personal accessories. Into the former fit the table set, the console, and various combinations including the gramophone. Personal accessories date from the portable gramophone rather than the radio, and range from the attaché case to the lady's handbag in their style of approach.

It is in this category of portable sets that there is most scope for careful yet unrestricted design. Careful, because most cabinets are made from plastic, and in order to spread tool costs manufacturers must be assured of a long production run. Unrestricted, because there is plenty of competition, a wide choice of materials and colours, and designers have to contend with the demands of fashion. Fashion has decreed, for example, that the shoulder slung radio set is now obsolete. There are still many neat attaché case versions including, for the first time, a radio-gramophone with battery radio/amplifier and spring motor. In several sets some attention has at last been paid to the detail of hinges and clasps. New covering fabrics have given variety and texture to cabinets and have taken them far away from the imitation leather of the past.

In a number of cabinets the stretched speaker fabric, which inevitably sagged, or in manufacture was

ABOVE: The amber plastic escutcheon plate and dial are an interesting feature of this design. The plastic is in one piece with an embossed pattern on the inside. Ferguson Radio Corporation Ltd.

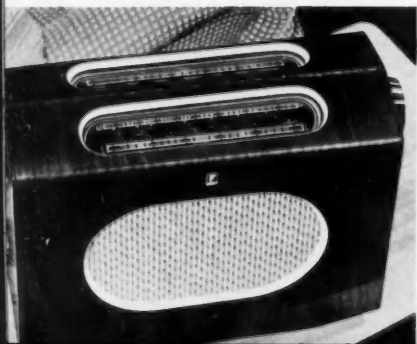
ABOVE: In this attaché case battery portable the frame aerial is contained in the lid. Also note the neat catches and handle and the central position of the dial. Ferranti Ltd.

ABOVE: A portable for mains or battery in dove-grey plastic with metal 'sandwich' faced with roughcast terra cotta coloured paintwork. The handle drops flat when not in use. Pye Ltd.

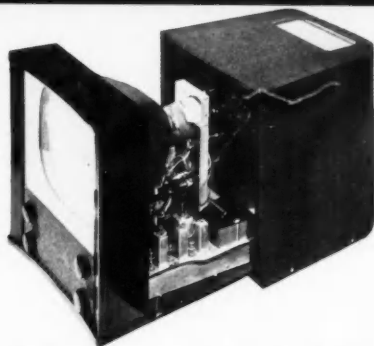
BELOW: A twin-sided table set with a chassis that slides in from the bottom. It is finished in straight grain walnut with cream paint surrounds. Ferranti Ltd.

BELOW: A plastic table receiver with a bowed shape that is now finding a wide application amongst radio sets. Designed by David Ogle for Murphy Radio Ltd.

BELOW: A table receiver with dial and controls arranged at the best positions. The speaker has a large baffle area and is behind a plastic shutter. Pye Ltd.







ABOVE: The ASTRA table receiver using the new rectangular tube. A particular feature is the one-piece back, which looks neater and is safer in use than the more usual fibre. Designed by Victor Taylor for Ace Radio Ltd. TOP RIGHT: Projection television equipment. The loudspeaker unit houses the screen and the cabinets are faced with light walnut fluted strips. Philips Electrical Ltd.

CENTRE RIGHT: An example of the bureau type radiogram. The stays are particularly strong to allow an album of short playing records to be placed on the flap. Ferranti Ltd. BOTTOM RIGHT: A plain neat cabinet in straight grained walnut using a 12 inch tube with surround painted onto the protecting glass. Designed by A. F. Thwaites for Murphy Radio Ltd.



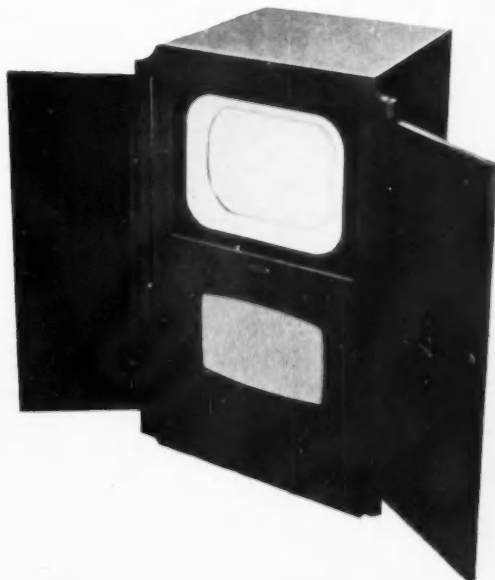
mounted askew, has been replaced by plastic shutters or by a separate moulding of considerable intricacy. Some of these maintain a good design standard while others recall the more hysterical radiators of American cars. It is interesting to note that the best of these designs have been in production for a long time. The Robert's JUNIOR, and the Murphy 144, which were illustrated in DESIGN, April 1950, are still virtually unchanged. New techniques in valve manufacture and the widespread use of a simple surge suppressor, allow most of these sets to work from either batteries or mains. The storage of the mains lead is still a problem, and no one has yet used the spring absorber occasionally found on telephone and ceiling light fittings.

## Wooden cabinets

Here, the extremes in taste were as wide as ever. The sets with a matt finish were rare, and muddy stained veneers, quarter panelling, worrying detail, odd mouldings and easily scratched lacquer were much in evidence. With the exception of the three or four manufacturers who mostly sell radios through multiple furniture stores, most sets were more sober in style. The majority of table radios, apart from the few models illustrated, were plain rectangular boxes, though a surprisingly large number have now adopted the sloping back. No doubt this type of design saves timber and prevents articles being placed on top of the set, but in nearly all cases the side view is visually uncomfortable, for it involves an awkward curving back line.

In television, manufacturers of both table and console sets tended to bulge the screen surround forward and above the rest of the cabinet. This is particularly unfortunate in consoles as it tends to make them look like two boxes on top of each other. When, as in many examples, radio is added as an afterthought, the boxes have a strange tiered and disconnected look about them.

The newest addition to television is the front projected picture. This invariably means that two items of equipment are necessary: the screen with loudspeaker, and the projector. Two models suitable for domestic use were shown (Decca and Philips) and both sets of cabinets were treated with care and interest. As the projector must be a certain



distance from the screen, arrangements have been made to enable the projector (with the control panel) to be moved out of the way when not in use. The screen slides or rolls into the speaker cabinet which is placed against one wall. The projected picture, which is brilliantly clear and remarkably free of lines, issues from a small cathode tube. As the picture is flat and up to 3 feet by 4 feet in size it can be viewed by many people in a dark room.

Radio-gramophones are at last getting away from the inevitable box, with its unwieldy lid from which all accumulated objects must first be cleared before it is used. The bureau was much in evidence, but credit for this must be placed with HMV, who produced the first one in 1936, complete with record storage space, maps, clock and every other amenity.

## Plastic cabinets

Of the few 'static' sets in plastic, there were no new television receivers and there were no radio receivers to equal the Ferranti by the late Christopher Nicholson (DESIGN IN THE FESTIVAL, page 47). Among the smaller ones the Murphy 191, illustrated, with its intelligent juxtaposition of three independent parts should be mentioned. On the whole the swing away from plastic in the larger sets is commendable. The general shortage of timber forced many manufacturers to use plastics, but most of them missed the opportunity by producing cabinets made to look like wood.

The overall effect of the Show was not nearly so tasteless as the British Furniture Exhibition held recently. There is no doubt that the radio industry still offers a lead to the bulk of the furniture industry in its approach to design. Nevertheless, most cabinet finishes were uniformly dark and shiny, and contrasted strangely with the unstained natural shelves, doors, panels, etc, against which they were displayed. This would have been particularly striking, and therefore more regrettable, if a larger number of stands had been designed as contemporary living rooms.

In contrast with the few sets already illustrated, the majority of exhibits at the Show maintained a common and insensitive design standard. Differences between the kinds of design put forward by most manufacturers were less marked than in former years. Aesthetic standards seemed to be levelled down and, as Mr Sharp suggests in the preceding article, a number of design clichés became apparent. The purpose of the photographs on this page is to outline some of the commonplaces which were to be found amongst a wider number of sets than those actually mentioned.



1



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Both these table-models, 1 and 2, are attempting to achieve too much visual effect in an essentially limited area. The recessions and projections, especially in 1, where contrasting veneers are added, tend

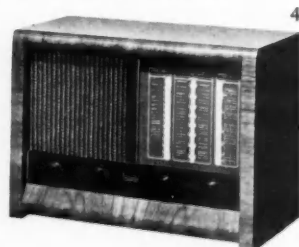
to divert the eye from one plane to another without purpose. In addition, both models have an awkward curving back line: a current cliché in the trade. (1, Pilot Radio Ltd; 2, The Gramophone Co Ltd.)

A common tendency to be noted with the rectangular 'boxlike' receivers can be seen in 3 and 4. The main outside frames of these sets enclose several rectangles and squares; each one carefully defined

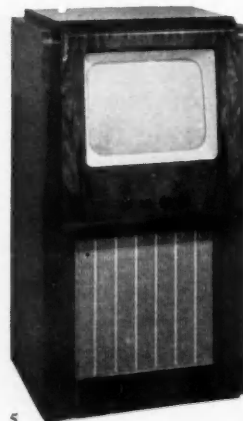
and yet unrelated aesthetically with the others. The unrestricted use of 'wrap-round' veneers is another habit from which few sets are free. (3, Ultra Electric Ltd; 4, Ferguson Radio Corporation Ltd.)



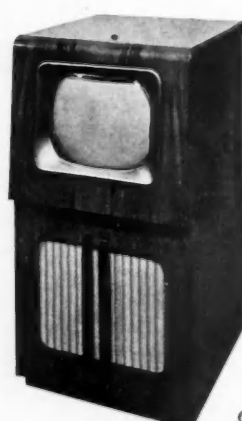
3



4



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6

A number of console and table sets this year attempted to emphasise the screen by allowing it to bulge forward and above the rest of the cabinet. This practice, shown in 5 and 6, makes the cabinet look top-heavy and appear to be composed

of two boxes. The two vertical strips of wood across the speaker opening in 6, represent a recurrent cliché. (5, English Electric Co Ltd; 6, McCarthy Felgate Radio and Television Ltd.)





## STYLE FOR HELICOPTERS?

Mark Hartland Thomas \*

SOME OF THE PROBLEMS concerning the proper shape of a helicopter were discussed with the designers of the Bell Aircraft Corporation, at a visit to their works paid recently by the Design for Production team of the Anglo-American Council on Productivity.

There appears to be a danger that helicopters may become the subject of fantastic styling for they are not safeguarded to the same degree as aeroplanes by the requirements of aerodynamics. The wings and fuselage of an aeroplane must be of a certain shape or it will not leave the ground, but the rotor of a helicopter could lift almost any shape of fuselage into the air, even a pantomime elephant.

The illustrations of Bell aircraft show the designers' various attempts at a solution. Numbers 1 to 3 give a design sequence from simple to fancy and back to simple again. For the middle version, 2, the designers tried to dress it up, for they were influenced in the design of the cabin by the larger machine shown in 4, which will be dealt with later. To improve the appearance the tail boom was covered with fabric. This caused trouble by

making the tail lift up when flying sideways or hovering at right angles to the wind, which was corrected on the next version by adding a spoiler. However, the absurdity of this was soon realised. For the next model, 3, the designers reverted to the PLEXIGLASS bubble type with openwork tail boom, and so were back where they started, except for fitting skids instead of wheels. The bubble and the spidery boom have a simple, functional rightness about them, in spite of the accessories tied on behind the pilot, whereas there is a visual falsity in the styled version confirmed by the aerodynamic fault already mentioned.

There is a wonderful opportunity, largely ignored at the present



\* Chief Industrial Officer C.o.I.D.



time, for a designer to accept the helicopter form as a bubble with a spindly tail, and bring out its full character in a fresh design. The helicopter, 4, shows how not to do this. Both 4 and 5 are a larger machine not in the same series as the first three. In the case of 4, the firm employed a consultant industrial designer who, although he gave the craft a sweet, easy shape, missed the point and failed to bring out the essential nature of a helicopter. This model is streamlined for forward flight, rather like a boat, whereas the important flow of air is downwards from

3

the rotors, not fore to aft as in an aeroplane. A minor result of this misconception was that the air intake facing forward was inadequate; but much more important was the loss of visual interest, by failing to give the helicopter a shape that makes its performance clear to the eye.

The last example, 5, shows the Bell designers' attempt to improve 4. The ideas of the consultant designer were discarded except for the aft part of the tail boom. The cabin has been enlarged to accommodate six stretcher patients athwartships. At the same time, it has been rounded more fully towards a spherical shape to agree better with the downward air flow. This is nearer the mark, but it is a pity that the detailing is now rather coarse again. One hopes that Bell will find a designer with discernment enough to appreciate the complex problems involved and produce something really good.

4

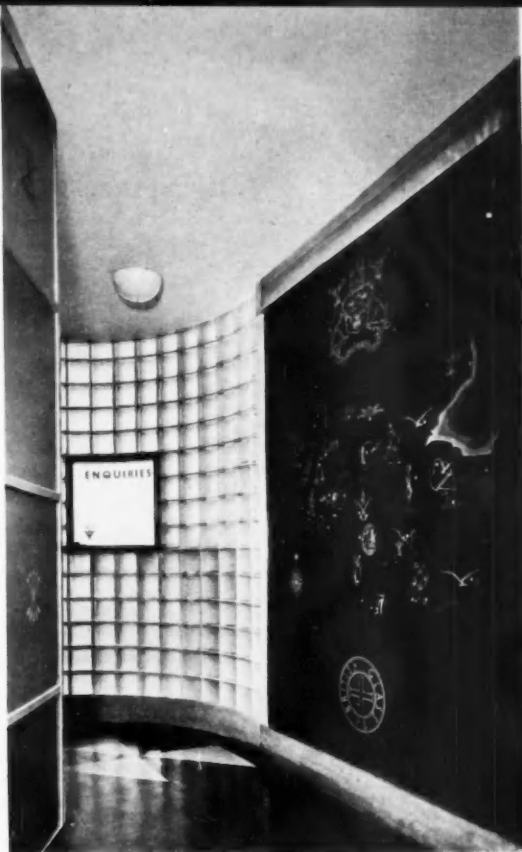


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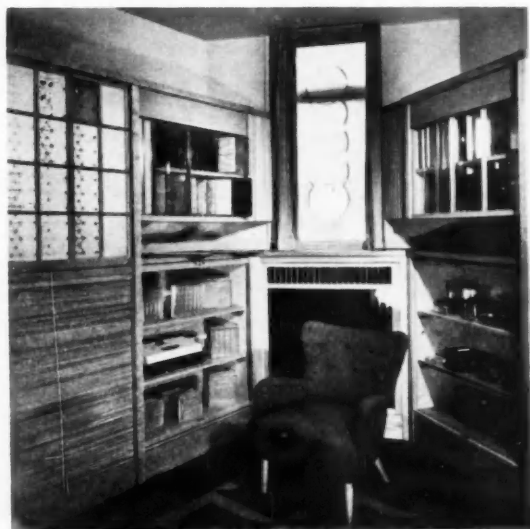
# New Nottingham Showroom

THE MANUFACTURERS OF BUILDING components are at an advantage when decorating their showrooms, because they can make use of their own products in many practical ways which are infinitely more convincing than the usual display treatments. Pilkington Bros Ltd have completely remodelled their Nottingham showroom and offices, and in doing so have made full use of their wide range of ARMOURPLATE, and other types of toughened and decorative glass. The original wooden glazed doors of the entrance vestibule have been replaced by ARMOURPLATE, with decorative side panels and a large transome, producing a very light effect. Glass blocks are used on a curved wall with an inset 'Enquiries' sliding window of painted and fire-toughened, bent and polished plate-glass with a stippled surface. Large floor-to-ceiling panels of black glass bear a decorative map. Part of the ceiling is devoted to a demonstration of prismatic versus ordinary glazing, showing how light rays are bent by the former to give an even illumination on walls and ceiling, which contrasts with the sharp shadows obtained through plain glass. An unsightly beam running diagonally across the existing ceiling has been



successfully masked by a shaped false ceiling with concealed lights above. Partition walls are built up from another type of glass with vertical bands of light-diffusing blocks.

A group of sliding panels demonstrate various VITROLITE design schemes, and radiators are masked by black sandblast fluted VITROLITE panels, fixed in wooden frames with ventilation grilles at top and bottom. ARMOURPLATE is also used for a pair of steps, consisting of two single treads fixed at each end to vertical wooden posts. Sven Sternfeldt, staff architect to Pilkingtons, is responsible for remodelling the showroom. M. J. L.



LEFT: This end of the showroom might almost be taken for a private sitting room. Built-in cupboards provide ample space for samples and promotion material. The left-hand cupboard front has been glazed with 24 different types of figured and tinted glasses.

TOP: The left-hand wall of the entrance vestibule incorporates painted and fire-toughened glass panels in several shades of red, with alternately stippled or polished surfaces. A sandblast map at right indicates industrial characteristics of local towns.

## DESIGN OVERSEAS

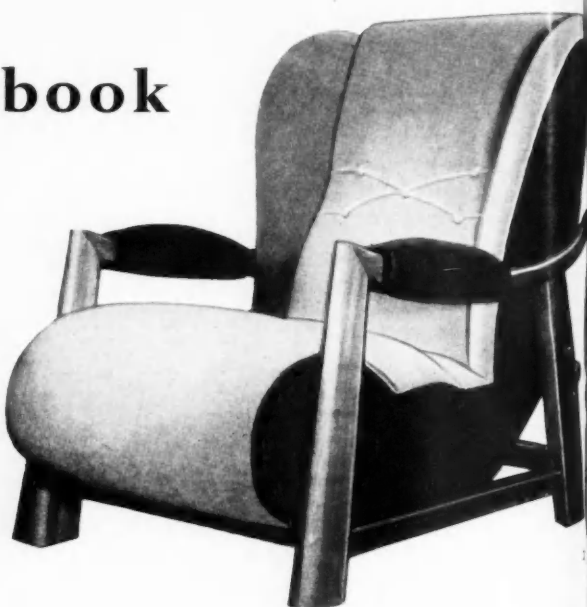
# BELGIAN Notebook

Alec Davis

THE BEST THING about design (or should I say the worst thing?) is that once you take an interest in the subject you cannot get away from it. A holiday visit to Belgium was not intended to be a study-tour and mercifully it did not become one. However, I could not help seeing design all around me and, in the absence of more serious research, these notes on the Belgian scene may have some value.

The scene could be more accurately described as international, since the manufactured goods of half the world are on show in Belgian shop windows or on Belgian roads. In the main shopping street of a provincial town you can see Dutch pewter and French perfumery, German or Swedish office equipment, British ties, dress fabrics and radio sets, Swiss chocolate boxes and American domestic appliances, as well as native products. Almost as many countries are represented in the shoppers' parked cars. International comparison here, where goods are bought and sold, may produce different results from international comparison in design exhibitions, where one country's products are selected more skilfully and presented more tastefully than another's. No one country is noticeably pre-eminent in the shops, and indeed it is hard to find any markedly national characteristics among the goods that compete for custom, though the American product has almost always a slick shininess which the European lacks. These remarks, then, are not considered judgments, but rather a traveller's tale of things seen in Belgium in 1952.

FURNITURE. If it can be assumed that this is usually the native product, then the contemporary furniture movement has yet to spread into the Belgian industry. One gazes hopefully into every furniture shop window and almost every time one is reminded that solidity and ornateness are easier to sell to unimaginative people (most people) than elegance or subtlety of proportion. Whether many of the bulging shapes to be seen in the typical Belgian furniture shop deserve house-room is perhaps an academic question; a more practical and more puzzling question is how anybody finds house-room for them.



STOVES. As every Simenon reader knows, stoves are an essential of the Belgian home. They are made in all shapes, colours and finishes. One model, which is sleek almost to the point of streamlining, and smooth in its coat of vitreous enamel, has little floral transfers on the corners of its doors: a 'split-personality' stove. No present-day designer has achieved, in a modern manner, anything to equal the charm and the richness of the old Belgian cast-iron fireback panels.



**POTTERY.** Of most of what the Belgian shops are showing, perhaps the less said the better. I saw shadows of pre-war Susie Cooper, but they lacked the individual character of the original; I saw many more shadows (or perhaps these were originals) of the prizes on a hoopla stall. The crafty product is different from the factory-made, but not necessarily better or even more interesting.

**GLASS.** The best-known Belgian glassworks, the Cristalleries de Val Saint-Lambert, lean heavily on their past; few of their wares are as beautiful as their name. Among these few there are, however, some shapely vases in 'cased' glass which exploit with restraint a technique English glass workers exploited with exuberance some 70 or 80 years ago. The technique is one of 'casing' clear glass in coloured glass, and then cutting through the coloured outer layer to make a clear intaglio pattern.

**SILVER AND PLATE.** The Belgian silversmith's wares are usually conservative in style, and often over-ornate, though never to the same degree as those of the furniture manufacturer. There is a certain amount of good simple stuff, especially in the shops of F. Wiskeman, who has a factory in Brussels and his own retail outlets, so that he is in a good position for finding out what the public wants. Scandinavian influence in this field is perhaps inescapable; it is seen, for example,

in a teapot with a small hot-water jug sitting where (to English eyes) the lid ought to be. There is much good pewter on sale in Belgium, but one gets the impression that a considerable amount of it is made in Holland.

**EATABLES.** What Belgium achieves in the moulding of chocolate and ice-cream, and the shaping of patisserie, is perhaps folk-art rather than industrial design, but it is none the less noteworthy. The tall sugar-loaf, an artless but by no means characterless shape which is almost forgotten in England, is still familiar in Flanders. You do not have to hunt for it; it is to be seen in the chain-stores as well as the small family shops. The packaged sugar-loaf, wrapped in blue paper neatly labelled and held in place by two parallel bands of string, is a combination of old and new.

**PACKAGE DESIGN.** The design of anything in which wording is prominent presents a special problem because Belgium has two languages. Flemish and French are so different that essential wording must be given in both languages: Kortrijk is not immediately recognisable as Courtrai, nor Tienen as Tirlemont. A shop which is a *magasin* is at the same time a *winkel*.

**STREET FURNITURE.** The type of street lamp used on new main roads is simple and shapely. Its silvery metal reflector is bright outside as well as inside and catches the sunlight so noticeably that even in daylight a

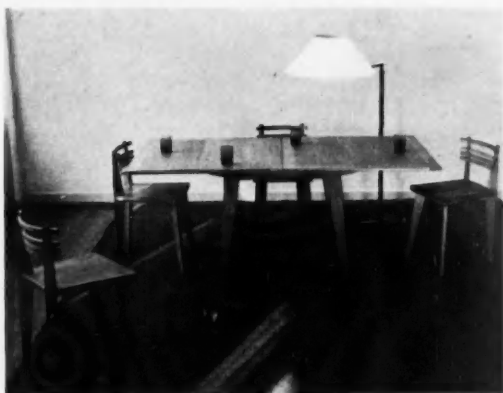
1: A typical example of Belgian upholstered furniture. The bulging, insensitive form seems to stem from German middle-class taste. 2: This group of furniture, at a recent Brussels exhibition, shows a

more progressive spirit, although much of its strength is derived from styles in other countries. 3: Quite a pleasant tea-service design but the handles look as if they might easily break off. 4: A vase

in 'cased' glass. 5: One of a pair of door handles seen in a Bruges street. It compares well with the handles in the Regatta Restaurant at the Festival of Britain, 6.







7

7: This Belgian contemporary furniture has the negative virtue of being free from ornament. 8: Too-fashionable lettering on this Belgian steamer has quickly become unfashionable; and it never was very readable. 9: Picture on this packet has the air of an artless period piece; the letter-forms and their arrangement suggest that the artlessness is more apparent than real.

8



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10: New van by the makers of the German 'People's Car,' designed for economical manufacture. The limited overhang of the body beyond the back axle gives it an elongated appearance, and is determined by the position of the engine mounted at the rear. 11: What looks like two buses, parked nose to tail . . . is in fact one bus, 12, employing the articulated form of construction which in Britain is permitted only for goods vehicles. This touring coach carries 79 passengers - nine in the front compartment with the driver, and seventy more in the main body. Coachwork by Carrosserie Verleure NV, of Jeper, on an American chassis (White).



12



11

highway is patterned with points of light that mark its route into the distance.

MOTOR-CARS. Most large cars in Belgium are American, while among the smaller cars, Germany, Britain and France are well represented; Italy, Sweden and Czechoslovakia also run. The Americans stand out from the rest not only because of their size but by their more bulging curves, their broader grins, their striving to be different in detail while all following-my-leader in general lines. But looks are not everything in car design. The Belgians have bought in large quan-

tities the beetle-shaped Volkswagen, which now has a growing family of big brothers in the form of vans and small buses by the same makers, again with the engine at the rear. Instead of the car's strong downswept curve at front and rear, these later models have practically no sweep at all: one can almost imagine their bodywork being made by the mile as a large square-sectioned tube, and cut up into convenient lengths for fitting over four wheels.



## Better lamp post design

A list of approved designs of street lighting columns is available at the CoID for consultation by local authorities and other interested organisations.

The Council has appointed a committee to approve designs, submitted by manufacturers. Its main object is to improve the appearance of lamp posts, but it hopes at the same time to have a good influence upon the functional aspects. It therefore works with the Ministry of Transport, the Road Research Laboratory, the Association of Public Lighting Engineers and the British Standards Institution.

Members of the committee are: W. J. Worboys, member of the CoID and a Director of Imperial Chemical Industries Ltd (chairman); G. Grime, of the Road Research Laboratory; Herbert J. Manzoni, Birmingham City Engineer and Surveyor; J. M. Richards, Editor of THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW; F. R. S. Yorke, architect; Gordon Russell, Director, CoID; Alistair Maynard, Chief Officer, CoID Scottish Committee; M. Hartland Thomas, Chief Industrial Officer, CoID; J. M. Benoy, Industrial Officer, CoID; George Williams, Industrial Officer, CoID (secretary).

Since its formation, the committee has received 100 new designs from manufacturers of which it has approved 48 and referred 52 back to the manufacturers with recommendations for improvement.

The Council's industrial staff is available to manufacturers for advice before making

submissions to the committee. Most manufacturers take advantage of this and a number have employed consultant designers on the Council's recommendation.

The committee aims to extend its interest to all kinds of street equipment, and for this purpose a section of 'Design Review,' the Council's photographic index of good current British products, has been opened for street equipment (such as bus shelters, outdoor seats, bollards, litterbins). Approved street lighting standards are included in this list.

## Courses for retailers

Two residential courses on furniture and soft furnishings for buyers and selling staff, organised by the Council of Industrial Design, will be held at Attingham Park, Shrewsbury, from October 6-10 (furniture), and from October 13-17 (soft furnishings). The purpose of the courses is to give students the opportunity of increasing their knowledge of furniture and furnishings and to stimulate their interest in contemporary design.

There will also be a small exhibition of contemporary furniture and fabrics which will be used by the lecturers to illustrate their talks. Films and film strips will be shown during both courses.

Speakers at the furniture course will include Edward Pinto, Alec Gardner-Medwin, David Pye, Dennis Young, Olive Sullivan and George Breeze. At the soft furnishings course lectures will be given by Paul Reilly, Alma Faulkner, John T.

Murray, John Mellor, Olive Sullivan and Gordon Russell.

Retailers wishing to enrol themselves or their staff for the courses should apply to Miss Jean Stewart, Retail Officer, CoID, Tilbury House, Petty France, London SW1. The inclusive charge per head for each course is £7 7s.

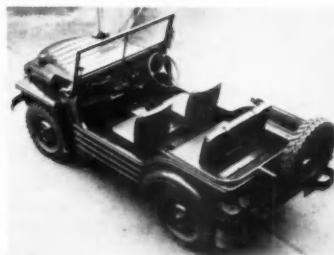
To follow up their successful conference on design in March, the Co-operative Union and the CoID have arranged a residential course on furniture design for sales staffs from furniture departments of Co-operative Societies. It will be held at Abbey Wood, London SE2, from October 20-24.

On October 28-30 a conference for Co-operative departmental managers will be held, at which members will discuss problems of design with special reference to the retailer's responsibility and Co-operative opportunities.

The courses cost £7 7s and £3 3s respectively and details may be obtained from the Chief Education Officer, Co-operative Union Ltd, Stanford Hall, Loughborough, Leics.

## An Austin 'jeep'

This new four-wheel drive Austin personnel carrier, called the CHAMP, recalls the design of the famous wartime American jeep. Peacetime possibilities of this vehicle were quickly realised by the Rover Company who have produced the LAND-ROVER on a large scale. The new Austin, which is powered by a four cylinder OHV engine,



shows a refinement of detail not only in its technical specification, but in its clean, robust workman-like appearance.

The parallel lines usually applied to the luxury coach for effect, here perform the useful function of maintaining strength and rigidity in the well-designed body-shell. The seat design and layout is particularly good and the instrument panel is simple enough to please the most hardened motorist.

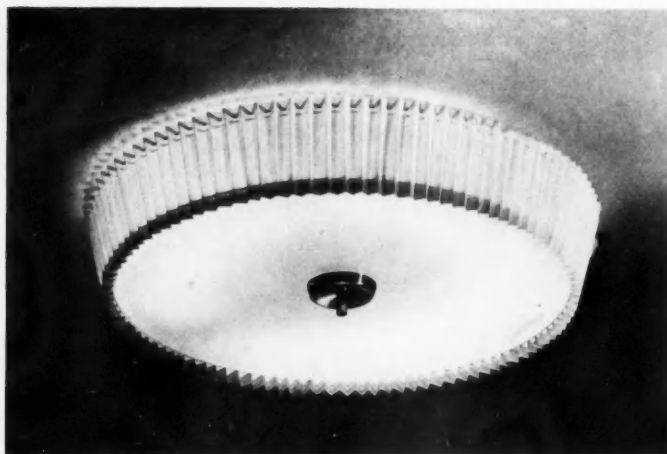
The CHAMP may be seen at the Commercial Motor Show until October 4. An illustrated article on the show will be published in next month's DESIGN.

## News from Scotland

A new range of contemporary embroidery designs by Scottish artists is being sold in the form of transfers and traced goods, by manufacturers in Scotland who are co-operating with the CoID Scottish Committee in a campaign to improve the design of needlework. The designs are the result of separate approaches made to the CoID by the Scottish Education Department, the Scottish Women's Rural Institutes, the Needlework Development Scheme and the Scottish Youth Leadership Training Association, who felt that a healthy demand for contemporary designs existed. A small exhibition showing 11 examples of the new embroidery will make a tour of



*Inexpensive furniture is used in this living room of a timber house completely furnished by Heal & Son and built by W. H. Colt, Son & Co Ltd at Bethersden, Kent. The house is one of a prototype pair suitable for rural council and private housing built under the auspices of the Ministry of Health. Both the houses, unfurnished and furnished, are open to the public until October 11.*



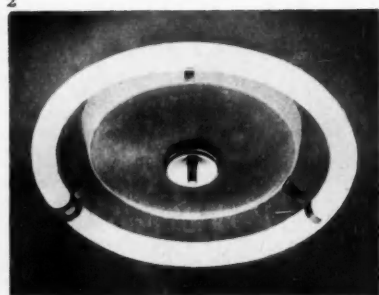
## METHODS AND MATERIALS

### Circular Fluorescent Lamps

The latest range of lighting units to be introduced by the General Electric Co Ltd marks a new departure in fluorescent fitting design. The fittings are intended for use with the new OSRAM circular 'hot cathode' fluorescent lamp of 16 inch diameter. They are suitable for domestic use, hotels, restaurants, etc, where decorative fluorescent fittings housing a lamp of medium light output are required. The lamp is rated at 40 watts and the gap between the two ends is filled by a special 4-pin plastic cap which makes the circle complete.

This circular fluorescent lamp has been developed to meet a demand for a more compact light source than the familiar straight fluorescent tube. The first few models in the new range comprise ceiling and pendant units and a floor standard. The simplest design, 2, is a ceiling fitting which consists of a cream-coloured metal spinning to house the control gear and at the same time support the lamp. A more elaborate variation on this theme, 1, is a fitting which incorporates a white flashed-opal glass disc below the lamp and a pleated paper diffuser. This model is available either as a ceiling or a pendant fitting.

A similar range of fittings incorporating the tungsten ballast circuit will also shortly be available. This circuit will provide instant starting and eliminate the necessity for a choke. Special arrangements have been made to allow satisfactory operation without the necessity of earthing. The OSRAM tungsten ballast lamp will increase the overall light output while its light will blend with that of the fluorescent circle to produce illumination of a warm colour.



women's organisations in Scotland this winter (DESIGN, September 1951, page 9).

Seven furnished rooms are to be exhibited by the CoID Scottish Committee at the 'Modern Homes' exhibition in Kelvin Hall, Glasgow, which opens on October 8. The stand is designed by Gillespie, Kidd and Coia and built by Wylie and Lochhead Ltd. Room settings will be furnished from Wylie and Lochhead by Margery Benson-Harries, and from Elders Ltd by Mrs Mary Tindall.

A series of lectures on design in industry are to be held in the Royal Philosophical Society's rooms, Glasgow. On October 3, the speaker will be Sir Gerald Barry, and on November 7, John Barnes, of Allen-Bowden Ltd. At least three other meetings have been arranged.

### Sir Ambrose is 80



Sir Ambrose Heal celebrated his eightieth birthday last month and we offer him our congratulations. To mark the occasion Heals devoted a special window in which was shown furniture designed by Sir Ambrose 50 years ago.

### FBI award to RCA

The Federation of British Industries annual prize offered for the best work in industrial design by a student of the Royal College of Art has been awarded to James Williams. Mr Williams, who has been studying furniture design at the College has recently specialised in furniture and fittings for ships-cabins. With Professor R. D. Russell, he was responsible for the second prize gained by the RCA in the competition for ships-cabin design organised by the Scottish Committee of the Council of Industrial Design. (See DESIGN, March 1952, page 22.)

### Wedgwood Coronation mugs

Illustrated on our front cover this month is a Coronation mug designed by R. Guyatt for Josiah Wedgwood & Sons Ltd. Wedgwood's are also to produce again the mug designed by Eric Ravilious for the Coronation of Edward VIII, which was subsequently adapted for George VI. The illustration on page 6 shows how the original design has been brought up-to-date by adding the figure 11 to the Coat of Arms.

### New light fittings

The light fittings on the facing page come from a new range designed by Paul Boissevain and made by Merchant Adventurers Ltd. The wall bracket may be mounted in either upward or downward position. The 'brandy-glass' shade is in three-ply white opal glass. The metalwork is anodised aluminium in satin silver, gold or copper. Similar

pendant and ceiling units in three sizes are also made with and without a reflector.

The pendant fitting is also in aluminium anodised satin silver and white opal glass. The aperture in the shade gives extra downward illumination and allows a new light bulb to be fitted without removing the shade. Similar ceiling and wall bracket units are also made with a 22 inch diameter reflector and/or louvre. The fitting is supplied with cord instead of tube suspension.

## Exhibitions

An exhibition of Victorian and Edwardian Decorative Arts will be held at the Victoria and Albert Museum from October 24 to January 18. It will celebrate the centenary of the opening of the Museum of Ornamental Art at Marlborough House in 1852. The Museum was opened at the behest of the Prince Consort and financed out of the profits of the 1851 Exhibition. Later, it was moved to Kensington and renamed the Victoria and Albert Museum.

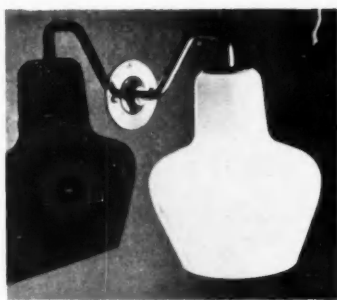
An exhibition of 80 posters and other work by Abram Games is to be held at the Ben-Uri Art Gallery, 14 Portman Street, London W1, from October 16 to November 7.

## Publications

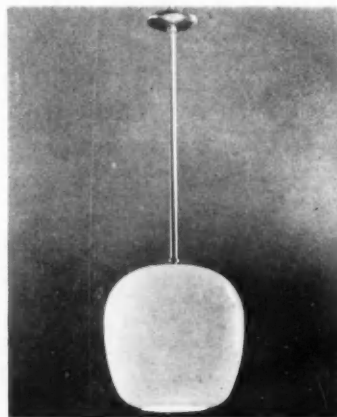
**Report of the National Advisory Committee on Art Examinations, HMSO, 6d**

Why do we not train art students wishing to become industrial designers, much earlier in the basic principles of industrial design, the working of industry and what it will expect from them? I ask the question after reading this report, which comments on the students' lack of technical knowledge or of proper technical grounding in design, as shown in the 1950 and 1951 examinations for the National Diploma in Design.

This examination is the later of two important tests in which the work of students is externally assessed. The earlier is the Intermediate Examination in Art and Crafts, in which industrial design has no distinct place: the subjects being Drawing from Life, Pictorial Composition and "Creative Design for a Craft." From this initial bias to pictorial art two things follow. Most students in the subsequent



Two of a new range of light fittings from Merchant Adventurers Ltd.



examination for the National Diploma in Design choose, from its three groups of subjects – Pictorial, Textile and Three-Dimensional – the pictorial group, i.e. painting and illustration, and do well. The percentage of passes was 73 per cent in 1950, 82 per cent in 1951. The smaller proportion who choose industrial design are

ill prepared and fare badly. The percentage of passes in the important textile group was 46 per cent in 1950, 42 per cent in 1951.

The dress examinations were very disappointing: students failed in such matters as cutting and grading patterns to different sizes and were "ill-equipped to become designers for the dress industry." The committee remarks further that even those who have gained the diploma in textile design find it hard to get a place in the industry and the presumption is that they and their teachers are not sufficiently in touch with its requirements. There is no fault to find with the specific remedies that have been administered or proposed – as far as they go. The Ministry of Education has held a course for teachers of dress in art schools. Courses in textile design have now been limited to centres best equipped to train designers. Proposals have been made to enlist the help of representatives of the industry in advising on courses and examinations.

What still seems to be needed is a more logical and effective structure of training in general. At the intermediate stage it seems reasonable to suppose that students should already be prepared for the task ahead by general groundwork in design for industry as distinct from painting and drawing or from some particular craft. This would suggest a revision (not apparently contemplated by the Advisory Committee) in the Intermediate Examination and the courses for it. It should have the effect of implanting an attitude of mind ready for the technical and more specialised problems of the National Diploma stage, when the students should be advancing towards the realities of industrial practice. At present they encounter them much too late. The 'design school' within the framework of the art school needs to be made consistent throughout – instilling essentials at the beginning, applying them progressively, and not leaving them to be painfully discovered by the student who has gone out into the world.

WILLIAM GAUNT

## Corrections

The desk illustrated in *DESIGN*, August, page 17 was designed by E. Maxwell Fry and made by Heal & Son Ltd.

The clock illustrated on the cover of the August issue was designed jointly by John Beadle and Jesse Collins.

## Acknowledgments

Page 15: Photograph of cotton velvet. Copyright reserved: Cotton Board, Manchester.

Page 14: Saucepans by courtesy of the Army & Navy Stores Ltd.

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*A view of the Ace stand at the recent radio exhibition showing three 'rooms' furnished in contemporary style by HOUSE AND GARDEN, Heals and Victor Taylor (chief designer for Ace Radio Ltd). See page 24 for review of cabinet design at the National Radio Show.*



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This illustration shows Story's "Versatile" hand-made furniture in Australian Walnut, for a Director's room of Fiat (England) Ltd. recently furnished by Story's.

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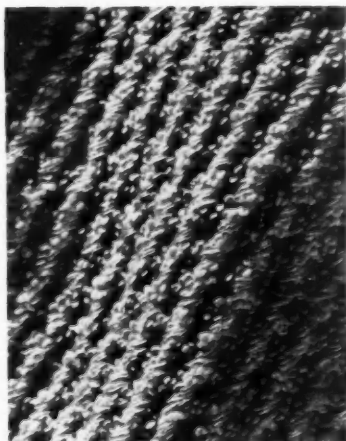
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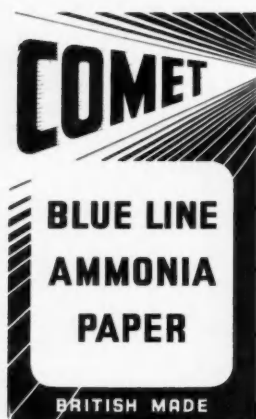
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★

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## Z I N C

The element zinc occurs in "zinc blende"—a natural form of zinc sulphide—and in certain ores of lead and silver. A hard bluish-white metal, zinc was originally produced only in China and Sumatra, and substantial quantities were once mined in Britain, but most of the world's supply now comes from the Americas and Australasia. Centuries before zinc was discovered in the metallic form, the Ancient Greeks were smelting its ores with copper to make brass, an alloy that has become indispensable to modern industry. Apart from its use

in alloys zinc is chiefly important today for coating or "galvanising" iron sheet and wire to give protection against rust. Zinc is also used as a roofing material and in the manufacture of casings for dry batteries, fittings for motor cars and plates for printing. Compounds of the element are well known in such diverse fields as medicine, dyeing and paint manufacture.

In addition to producing zinc strip for the electrical industry I.C.I. makes zinc-chrome pigments for paints and zinc compounds for the processing of rubber.





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